

New Mexico Cross Country Ski Club

February 2012

Photo by Dave Saylor

www.nmccskiclub.org

February's Program — Telemark Techniques

Presenter: **Guy Dahms**

When: **Thursday, February 9th, 7 p.m.**

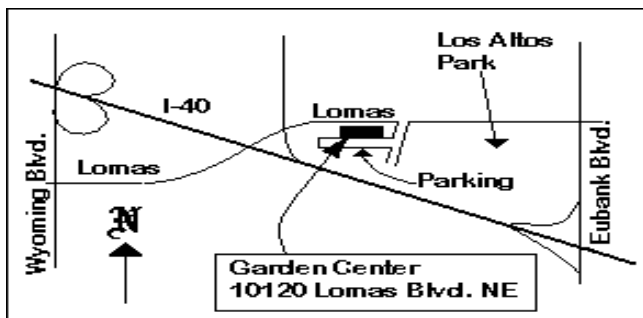
Where: Garden Center, 10120 Lomas Blvd. NE, Albuquerque

Back in the early 80's, Guy Dahms took up cross country skiing, and concluded that "going downhill on cross country skis was a hazardous activity"!! So he took a Telemark class to rectify the situation.



Guy has been an avid Telemark skier since then, including backcountry trails, numerous New Mexico and Colorado peak descents, and lift area skiing. Guy will present his "Telemark Tips", covering a handful of key items (from toe-to-head) to concentrate on for executing a successful and safe downhill ski. A few caveats (which includes a bit of gear talk) will also be included. Learn what things to practice, so you can move your technique up to the next level.

Telemark Practice Group, Saturday, February 18
Leader: Gordon Eatman Meet at Doc Long picnic area, **8:30 a.m.** Bring telemark or backcountry gear; leather boots and back country skis are fine. Contact Gordon at geatman@ymail.com for details. ■



On to Frisco

Our next bus trip is Frisco, CO, **Thursday, 2/23 - Sunday, 2/26**. Bus leaves at **10 a.m.** Watch your e-mail for details.

We had a fabulous time in Ouray thanks to Angela Welford and Randy Simons, Bus Trip Chairs, and our day tour leaders.



In Ouray: Eddie Segears; Erich Grotheer; Eddie, Thea & Ray Berg, Cathy Eichel; Linda Starr; Lester Byington.



From the President — Ray Berg

This month, with the ski season in full swing, I thought I would talk about ski technique. You have probably discovered that just about everybody is an



expert and they all have different opinions. I'm no different. But as a septuagenarian, I have found that there is always more to learn. And as the leader of our Youth Movement to revitalize the Club, I am interested in trying new things and improving my ski ability, too. So here goes . . .

My top 3 big things about cross country skiing (in

order) are: balance, balance and balance. There are a lot of other things, but these underpin all of them. From there, the goals are to move smoothly and efficiently (maybe even effortlessly) across the snow, whether it's uphill, downhill or level. Some people try to overpower the terrain, but the best way is to learn good technique. You learn the basics in our ski class, but to improve your technique, you have to learn about yourself.

Do you keep your knees bent slightly so you can move smoothly instead of jerking from one position to the next? Do you keep your hands down so you can keep your poles planted behind your glide foot, giving you more forward thrust rather than trying to use your poles just for balance? When you start uphill do you get up a little momentum to extend your normal skiing? And when you start doing herringbone, do you keep a kind of lumbering motion back and forth to keep outward pressure on your skis so they don't slip backwards? As you move along do you keep some weight on your heels to distribute your balance rather than having a single balance point over your toes? Of course, this stuff takes a lot more energy, endurance, and especially upper body strength than you first think. So some out of season gym work can help.

Watching a good skier is a little like watching ballet. The excitement is in watching somebody perform in a way that looks like they aren't working at it at all. So when I go out I look around to find skiers who have great technique so I can study them. I've even stopped skiers and asked them what they are doing to look so good so I can emulate their technique. You probably can list many of the great skiers in the Club, but you may not have identified just why you think they are great. Since they are often experts, they too love to pass their knowledge to others. And remember, a little adulation never bruised any of their fragile egos, either. ■

A Beautiful Day By Alan Shapiro

The search for good snow for our cross country ski outings in Ouray, on Sunday, January 15, prompted some scrambling by trip leader Randy Simons to find a route to satisfy the terrain and distance desired by our Class II group of 12. We headed for Little Molas Lake on a path through snow that had a breakable crust at times and nice and soft powder, up to 2 feet deep of sugary texture, at other times.



We first headed about seven-tenths of a mile straight out to the lake. It was almost totally packed down by snowmobiles and it had a single ice fisherman with about a half dozen spectators. One of our skiers, 14-



Phyllis Pryor, Lester Byington, Carl Smith, Liam Hurlburt, Cathy and Paul Eichel, Karen Leach, Nancy Costea, Randy Simons, Susan Harris and Dana Price.

Photo by Alan Shapiro

year-old Liam Hurlburt, learned from him that he was having some luck pulling fish from his hole.

We continued on about a half mile west of the lake and started what ended up being an elongated loop of a bit over 2 miles that included terrific views, a long climb, and route finding in some steep tree covered terrain. Randy kept us on a proper heading to get us safely back, though a bit late due mostly to some of that steep terrain we had to pick our way around. We worked together well, though Randy took most of the trail-breaking duty at the front on the untracked sections.

In summary: Clear skies and beautiful vistas throughout, mild temperatures, and a compatible group working together burning up plenty of calories for our 4 1/2-mile outing. It was a really fine day! ■

Up Corkscrew Gulch By Bet Gendron

I had seen a picture of skiers enjoying themselves high on Red Mountain peaks above Ouray on a past bus trip. This is where the Corkscrew Gulch, Class III, 2000 foot elevation gain tour would lead. This year the trip was lead by Carl Smith, who skied it in 1985.



Well, I thought, I've been at this for 3 years. I've had great instruction, I've worked hard and have taken on any challenge that I could, and I finally have equipment for this kind of trip, including avalanche beacon and shovel. So, I said to myself, let's do it — my first attempt at a Class III tour.

We started out with a group of 10, our leader Carl Smith, Ray and Thea Berg, Lester Byington, Karen Leach, Dana Price, her 14-year old son Liam, Randy Simons, Bill White and myself. The way up Corkscrew Gulch was on a steep road. It was obvious that we would be climbing from the start so we all donned our skins. I think this was the steepest, most extended trail I'd ever taken. At one point, two of our party turned around — a responsible decision. There were comments regarding skiing back down. It looked a little too steep and packed for possible telemark skiing, though off the track the snow was fluffy and inviting.



Bet Gendron, Liam Hurlburt, Carl Smith, Lester Byington and Randy Simons near the top of Corkscrew Gulch.

Photo by Dana Price

What a nice group, everyone working hard, encouraging attitudes, a little rest here and there, then continuing onward and upward. I enjoy climbing with skins. I love feeling the grip below my feet and I enjoy the workout. I could tell from my breathing that I was hovering at 90% of my maximum heart rate. What a way to work off chips and beer (*if one were to have had any*)!!

The scenery was fabulous. The Gulch narrowed and we negotiated an ice bridge over the creek. At our

chilly lunchtime break close to timberline, we were able to see the circular basin just under the Red Mountain peaks. As we moved on up above the trees into this inviting bowl we could see signs of recent avalanche activity around the sides. Tempting, but, no. Best to stay in a group and start moving back down the canyon.

Well, right away, we learned that some of this fluffy snow was made of bottomless, nonpacking sugar. Hard to edge and easy to become buried, whether right-side up or upside-down! Poles are only so long and the earth was far below. We could take 2-4 turns across the trail then be buried tips down. Taking lots of energy to get up; hands were offered for help. People soon re-skinned for traction and safety. I set myself in a strong snowplow and moved on down. Once we got to the packed road, there were those who knew it was time to walk.

I want to say that we were led by great, experienced skiers. There was a strong sense of concern for safety in decisions made for the group. I was also very impressed that evening to hear each person make only positive comments about the trip. I agree — *what a wonderful day!* ■



Guy Dahms, Larry Koeing, Laura Reeve, Cathy Dahms and Ken Lavine ski the area above Corkscrew Gulch in 1985.

Photo by Carl Smith



Hut Trip Update By Guy Miller

The trip to Fowler-Hilliard Hut, **March 3 - 8**, is full, with no waiting list.

To get on the waiting list, or for information about this or future hut trips, contact me at xcskiboy@aol.com or 294-7940. ■

A Trip Above the Town

By Frances Robertson

Thanks to Dennis Crowther's online investigation of Ouray and his discovery of the town's newest outdoor attraction, the Ouray Perimeter Trail, a number of Ouray bus trippers had a real treat this past weekend. Two groups of skiers hiked the trail, one on Sunday and one on Monday. The Monday group, lead by Lucy Miller, only saw about half of it, as snow conditions bumped our departure time up.



The Ouray Perimeter Trail takes hikers on a 4.2 mile hike, up and down and around the town and into its surroundings. It provides hikers with a chance to walk over the high Box Canyon metal bridge and look down a sheer rock face to the lower canyon trail just above Box Canyon Creek. Both of these excursions begin just behind the Box Canyon Lodge where we stayed. So, keep this in mind for future trips. You won't want to miss either hike, but especially the Perimeter Trail.

From the Lodge we crossed the wooden bridge and headed uphill on one of the local streets (*Queen Street*), which took us to the Box Canyon High Bridge trail. After climbing some steep snow-covered steps, we passed through a fairly long tunnel (*spooky and fun*) and came out on the Box Canon high metal bridge. From here we could see the creek far below



Ice climber seen from the Ouray Perimeter Trail.
Photo by Steve Gendron

and the metal walkway that handrails the creek up to the High Bridge point.

We spent some time checking out the creek below and then headed past the entrance to the Ice Park Trail. We hiked high above the Ice Park Trail turn-off and soon crossed another bridge where we watched ice climbers ascend sheets of ice with their "huge ice hooks," which actually look like enlarged fishhooks. One member of our group, Jon McCorkell, had ice climbed. The rest of us were not eager to try it, although we enjoyed watching lots of folks dig their ice hooks into those ice falls.

From there we scrambled a bit finding the trail since the signs faced the opposite direction (*we took the trail backwards*) and headed away from the Ice Park,

across the highway, and up a rocky slope to the old miners' Potato Patch, where they really grew potatoes. Near there we found the Portland Trail Road, crossed it, enjoyed another nice stretch through the forest and then headed back to a lower section of the Portland Road, meeting some Ouray natives along the way, who use this trail as a run and dog walk most days.

We walked the highway switchbacks for a way, in order to meet the bus deadline. We were especially sorry not to make it to the "Baby Bathtubs" where the Sunday hikers had found some serious ice on the trail and an interesting area, but time was up for the Monday group. I had hiked the day before on my own up to Cascade Falls and saw that it was a beautiful spot—a little more time and our Monday



Dennis Crowther finds a geocache along the trail on the Sunday hike.
Photo by Angela Welford

group would have made the complete circuit—but, there's always tomorrow and a reason to return to Ouray as soon as possible.

The trail is the outcome of long time planning and the result of a partnership with the City and County of Ouray, the US Forest Service, and the Boy Scouts of America. Further excursions from this trail are in the construction phase—the Cascade Cliff trail and a future West Cliff Trail. So when we return to Ouray we may have more places within easy reach to explore. ■

Upcoming Day Tours

By Guy Miller

Although the optimists among us are disappointed in snow conditions of recent days, the poor skiing conditions should come as no surprise to any of us. We prepared ourselves for snow by planning ski outings, although some were cancelled. Rather than give up on this winter, I say let's continue to hope. We have 5 additional day tours for February. Details will be provided on the website and on the e-group:

- **Sunday, 2/12:** Frances Robertson, snowshoe to Mt. Taylor. Ray Berg will lead a concurrent Class II ski trip starting at the same trailhead.
- **Wednesday, 2/15:** Karen Leach, Class II trip in the Sandias.
- **Saturday, 2/18:** Bet Gendron, Class II trip in the Jemez.
- **Sunday, 2/26:** Dana Price, Class I or II trip in the Jemez.



My Pack By Karen Leach

We all probably have a system in packing for a ski trip. Thanks to Angela Welford, Bus Trip Chair, we can refer to the list she provides to bus trip participants to double check what to bring.

I like to keep it simple.
Call me boring, but I bring

the same stuff on every trip so I don't have to spend time trying to figure it all out. I have a system of clothing that works for me. No matter what the temperatures or conditions — it's about layers. I wear a medium weight ski top, windproof breathable jacket and long underwear under my medium weight ski pants. I try to dress so I don't sweat, which can make you cold later.

In my pack I take a light wind/waterproof jacket and rain pants (*I've pulled the pant shell over my ski pants a couple of times while waiting for the bus*). Selecting a jacket with a good hood is crucial in protecting you from the wind and blowing snow. My hands get cold so gloves/mittens are important. I take 4 pairs of mittens (*each a different weight — liners to fleece lined*). Again, for different weather conditions I pack a wool hat, face mask and a head band.

I usually start skiing with warmer clothes and shed to my light weight mittens and head band by the time I'm ready for a drink. I always take water bottles filled with hot water from the tap so it will be luke warm by the time I drink (*helping me to stay warm*). I also take a thermos of hot tea for lunch, which keeps me from getting cold after eating.

Other essentials in my pack include a combination radio/GPS, extra batteries, compass, sitting pad for lunch and a lot of the other equipment listed in Guy Miller's article in last month's newsletter. I usually take my light weight down jacket stuffed at the bottom of my pack in case of emergencies.

I try to balance what's important to take along with weight — if my pack is too heavy I will quickly be exhausted. Being in good condition enables you to carry what's necessary, and over time you get used to the weight.

So that's what's in my pack!. If you have ideas, please share them by e-mailing me and I'll include it in an upcoming newsletter. ■

Ski Tour Ratings

Before going on a ski tour please review the rating of the trip and consider your skills:

CLASS I: Tour with less than 1,000' of elevation gain and less than 5 miles in total length. Skiers should be able to execute stops and turns. Some, *but not all*, tours are appropriate for novice skiers with minimal cross country experience. The pace will be slow (*1 to 1.5 miles per hour*). Persons with no cross country skiing experience **MUST** take the beginning lessons offered by the Club or must obtain the leader's permission **PRIOR** to joining a CLASS I tour.

CLASS II: Tour with less than 2,000' of elevation gain and less than 10 miles in total length. This tour requires intermediate skills and ability to maintain



Don Schmaltz in Ouray.

Photo by Bet Gendron

control on moderate slopes with techniques such as snowplowing, turning and traversing. Skiers should have enough stamina for sustained kick and glide touring on near level ground at a pace of 2 miles per hour for several miles and

should also be experienced at using climbing skins to climb trails with moderate slopes.

CLASS III: Tour with greater than 2,000' of elevation gain and/or greater than 10 miles in total length, or

otherwise characterized by technical challenges, or potential for same. This tour usually requires advanced skills and ability to competently and confidently climb and descend steep, narrow trails. The skier should be experienced with using climbing skins for both climbing and safely descending steep slopes. Skiers should have the endurance for skiing 10 miles or more within the time constraints of the tour.



Teri Sheldahl, Luis Suarez, Phyllis Pryor and Kim Feldman stop for a snack on a day tour to Oak Flat.

Photo by Susan Corban

In addition to the CLASS rating, a tour may be designated exploratory (Exp). This means the leader has not skied on this route recently (*or ever*) or is

Continued on page 6

unsure about some aspect of the proposed route. Participants should be experienced in backcountry skiing. They should be prepared for any possible situation and should have emergency gear with them.■



Frances & Mike Meier in Ouray.

Photo by Bet Gendron

DAY TOURS — *also check web for details*

Date: Saturday, February 4, 2012

Location: Sandia Mountains, Ellis Trailhead

Leader: Terri Elisberg, terri.elisberg@gmail.com or 450-9961

Rating: Class II

Distance: ~ 5 miles

Elevation Gain: 500 feet

Description: From parking at Ellis Trailhead ski trails off Service Road (*Rocky Point, Gravel Pit, Switchback*). If snow conditions are not good, may switch to snowshoes. Check e-groups for change.

Meet: 8:15 a.m. SE corner of Smiths (*Tramway & Central*) to carpool and/or meet leader at 8:30 a.m. at Molly's Bar parking lot at bottom of Tijeras exit ramp off I-40, head up N-14 to Molly's. Contact leader to confirm.

Who can go: Members and their guests

Date: Sunday, February 5, 2012

Class I beginner tour, intended for those who attended the Beginner Class in January, but open to other Class I skiers. Check February newsletter and website for details to be announced soon.

Date: Monday - Thursday, February 6-9, 2012

Location: Durango Hostel car trip

Leader: Guy Miller, xcskiboy@aol.com, 294-7940

Rating: Class I, II & III

Distance: Varies each day

Description: Skiing options: Durango Mt. Resort ski area, Nordic center, and numerous backcountry

possibilities, mostly Class II and Class III. The Nordic center is ideal for Class I skiers, although skiers of all levels can have a good time. We will probably stay at Durango Hostel, www.durangohometownhostel.com, ~ \$25/person/night. It's a great place to stay and socialize. This trip is a great opportunity for those who have been unable to get on a bus or hut trip to ski with the Club.

Meet: Contact leader

Who can go: Members only

Date: Saturday, February 11, 2012

Location: Winsor Trail from Santa Fe Ski Basin

Leader: Jackie Hertel, jhquickbeam@msn.com

Rating: Class II

Distance: 6 miles

Elevation Gain: 1000 feet

Description: Intermediate tour due to narrow, winding trail and some tricky turns. Ski to a point 1 mile past Nambe Creek with 1000' of uphill. Lunch at the meadow by Nambe Creek. The beginning steep, often icy, half-mile climb up to the cattle gate is usually hiked, carrying skis, or bring skins. Some skiers also find skins useful for the last 2 miles of the return trip. After enjoying the snow until 3:30 p.m. or so, we'll hit Santa Fe and Kakawa Chocolatier for heavenly rewards for our winter exercise.

Meet: Contact leader no later than 2/4. I will email time/location of carpool confirmation on 2/8.

Who can go: Members only



Diane Owens flies down the slope on Molas Pass in Ouray.

Photo Bet Gendron

Date: Saturday, February 18, 2012

Telemark Practice Group, Sandia Ski area, meet at Doc Long picnic area at **8:30 a.m.** Contact Gordon Eatman, leader, at 573-8067 or geatman@ymail.com.

Date: Sunday, February 19, 2012

Location: San Pedro Parks Wilderness

Leader: Guy Miller, xcskiboy@aol.com, 294-7940

Rating: Class III

Distance: 10 miles

Elevation Gain: 1000 feet

Description: From Cuba we'll start at San Gregorio Lake trailhead. We'll ski to the lake and proceed into the wilderness. If conditions allow, we'll ski a loop, returning on Palomas Trail. Except for the ascent to the

Lake and return descent, which can be walked or skinned, skiing will not be technically difficult, but potential distance makes it Class III. Strong Class II skiers can participate. Contact leader to confirm trip.

Meet: 7:30 a.m., west side of Target, Paseo del Norte (*where we meet for bus trips*).

Who can go: Members and their guests



Lester Byington, Phyllis Pryor, Nancy Costea, Susan Harris, and Karen Leach ski the Molas Lake day tour.
Photo by Carl Smith

Date: Saturday, February 25, 2012

Location: Winsor Trail/Raven's Ridge, Santa Fe Ski

Leader: Susan Corban, slcorban@unm.edu, 286-0989

Rating: Class III

Distance: 4.5 miles

Elevation gain: 1700 feet

Description: From the Santa Fe Ski parking lot, we'll go up Winsor Trail to the fence line at the top of the first ridge, turn uphill along the fence and ski along Raven's Ridge to the top of the ski area. We will return via the ski slopes. This trip features a very steep ascent and all skiers absolutely **MUST** have climbing skins and strong legs (**NOTE: Skiers who show up without climbing skins will be turned away**). Skiers should possess appropriate backcountry skis and boots. The descent requires good downhill skills.

Meet: 7:30 a.m. at NW corner of Target on Paseo del Norte (where we meet for bus trips). Skiers from elsewhere, contact leader to arrange meeting. **NOTE:** Skiers **MUST** contact leader to confirm they are going. Class III skiers, don't miss this one!



Phyllis Pryor, Marcia Congdon and Liam Hurlburt in Ouray.

Photos by Dana Price



= Monthly deadline for newsletter inclusion

February 2012						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4 Ski
			Yellowstone Air Trip			
5	6	7	8 Trail project	9 Club Meets	10	11 Ski
Ski	Durango Hostel		Car		Chama Car	
12	13	14	15	16 Board Meets	17	18
Chama			Ski			Telemark Clinic
						Ski
19	20	21	22 Trail project	23	24	25 Ski
Ski				Frisco Bus Trip		
26	27	28	29 Trail Project			
Bus	Ski					

March 2012						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
						Hut
4	5	6	7	8 Club Meets	9	10
Fowler-Hilliard Hut						
11	12	13	14 Trail project	15	16	17
18	19	20	21 Trail project	22	23	24
25	26	27	28 Trail project	29	30	31

2011-12 Officers and Board

President	Ray Berg	366-8104	rsberg01@comcast.net
Vice President	Wayne Kirkby	898-1654	ski1071607@aol.com
Secretary	Lucy Miller	401-2440	lucycecilia@gmail.com
Treasurer	Chris Standish	400-7089	standish.chris@gmail.com
Day Tours	Guy Miller	294-7940	xcskiboy@aol.com
Long Bus Trips	Angela Welford Randy Simons	281-1198 294-0192	awelford1017@gmail.com randy_simons@msn.com
Overnight Car/Hut Trips	Guy Miller	294-7940	xcskiboy@aol.com
Newsletter	Karen Leach	281-9836	karenleach7@msn.com
Instruction	John Thomas	298-5234	jt87111@comcast.net
Membership	Sherry Fitzmaurice	205-7155	skimembership@nmccskiclub.org
Programs	Terri Elisberg	281-9192	terri.elisberg@gmail.com
Mailing	Ruth Bargman-Romero	842-9735	rebrome@sandia.gov
Refreshments	Bet Gendron Marcia Congdon	299-6542 265-4199	gendrons@msn.com mecongdon@juno.com
Trails	Sam Beard	828-0673	samgbeard@msn.com
Web Site	David Wegner	344-8554	dave@naturesgrandeur.com
Email Group	Bob Potter	831-9779	hvac87108356@yahoo.com

New Mexico Cross Country Ski Club

P.O. Box 8425

Albuquerque, NM 87198-8425



Bill White and Carl Smith pause in Corkscrew Giuch, Ouray, 1/14/12.